

Winter Time Decision Near, Kozak Says

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The government will make a decision in the coming days regarding whether to turn back the country's clocks one hour because of the Olympic Games in Sochi, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak said Friday.

Kozak confirmed that the International Olympic Committee had raised the issue with the government "because TV stations want to know beforehand when the broadcasts of competitions will be," RIA-Novosti reported.

A media report in January suggested that the IOC had asked the government to turn the clocks back an hour so that European television viewers could enjoy the games in February 2014 with a time difference of two hours instead of three. The IOC later clarified that it had only asked for "an opinion" on the matter and that any decision was the government's responsibility.

Speaking to reporters Friday, Kozak said the IOC had asked Russia "to end the discussion and to make a final decision."

He added that such a decision would be made in the next few days because this was the only way forward. "We have no other solution. We cannot just make no decision and continue the discussion," he said.

Kozak said it was too early to say whether the time reform would remain in place or not.

A reversal of the reform would be seen as a blow to Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who pushed for it during his presidency, which ended last year.

The 2011 measure introduced daylight-saving time, or summer time, for the whole year by abolishing the resetting of clocks in spring and fall and keeping clocks set one hour forward.

This has led to shifting time differences with most other countries, which observe daylight-saving time. It also makes for an extra hour of morning darkness in winter while adding an extra hour of daylight in the afternoon.

Duma deputies [called for a return](#) to the previous regime last year, but the government has resisted, pointing to opinion polls that suggest public opinion is split.

International broadcasters are scheduled to discuss the Olympics at a meeting at the end of this month, and media reports have said they are pressing for Moscow to make a decision to reduce the time difference with Europe by then.

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